

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 R

DRAFTED BY EA:MSTEARNS:FMT

APPROVED BY EA:AWHUMMEL

S/S - MR. LUERS

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R 282329Z JAN 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

S E C R E T STATE 018393

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH, CB, VS, JA

SUBJECT: JAPANESE CONCERN RE CAMBODIA AND PARACELS

1. JAPANESE MINISTER YAMAZAKI CALLED ON DEPUTY ASST SECY STEARNS WEDNESDAY, JAN 23 TO DISCUSS CAMBODIA AND PARACELS.

2. ON CAMBODIA, YAMAZAKI SAID THAT HE HAD BEE INFORMED BY FONOFF THAT US WAS CONCERNED ABOUT GKR ABILITY TO DEFEND PHNOM PENH AND HAD ACTIVATED EVACUATION PLAN. STEARNS REPLIED THAT WE CONTINUED TO BELIEVE THAT GKR WOULD HOLD PHNOM PENH. WE DID NOT REPEAT NOT ANTICIPATE NEED TO EVACUATE AMERICANS FROM CITY. EVACUATION PLAN WAS KEPT IN STATE OF READINESS DURING ENEMY DRY SEASON OFFENSIVE OUT OF CONSIDERATIONS OF PRUDENCE AND NOT REPEAT NOT PESSIMISM. EMPHASIZING DESIRABILITY OF CLOSE HOLD ON EXISTENCE OF EVACUATION PLAN TO AVOID FEEDING ALARMIST RUMORS, STEARNS SAID THAT WHILE THE SITUATION AROUND PHNOM PENH WOULD CONTINUE TO BE DIFFICULT, WE BELIEVED FANK WAS DOING GENERALLY EFFECTIVE JOB AND WERE MOST ENCOURAGED BY CALM AND EFFICIENT WAY LONG BORET HAD
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TAKEN UP HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AS PRIME MINISTER. WE THOUGHT IT LIKELY THAT KHMER COMMUNISTS WERE HAVING PROBLEMS IN RECRUITMENT AND SUPPLY AND DOUBTED THEY HAD ENOUGH STRENGTH TO MAINTAIN PRESSURE ON CAPITAL

BEYOND NEXT FEW MONTHS. YAMAZAKI SEEMED REASSURED BY THESE OBSERVATIONS.

3. REGARDING PARACELS, YAMAZAKI SAID THAT ALTHOUGH JAPANESE GOVT TOOK NO POSITION ON SOVEREIGNTY OF ISLANDS, JAPANESE WERE DISTURBED BY IMPLICATIONS OF CHINESE MILITARY INTERVENTION THERE. YAMAZAKI WONDERED WHETHER PRC WOULD HAVE QUOTE DARED UNQUOTE TO ACT SO RUTHLESSLY IF THEY HAD NOT BEEN SURE THAT US WOULD NOT TAKE COUNTER-MEASURES. FURTHERMORE, CHINESE SUCCESS IN SEIZING ISLANDS MIGHT ENCOURAGE THEM TO ADVANCE THEIR INTERESTS MORE AGGRESSIVELY IN OTHER AREAS, SUCH AS SENKAKU'S, WHERE JAPANESE INTERESTS WOULD BE MORE DIRECTLY THREATENED. STEARNS REPLIED BY SAYING THAT HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE WRONG TO DRAW GENERALIZED INFERENCE ABOUT US ATTITUDE FROM EVENTS IN THE PARACELS. HE NOTED THAT THE SECRETARY, IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE JANUARY 22, HAD STATED THAT WE DID NOT REPEAT NOT REGARD THE PARACELS DISPUTE IN THE CONTEXT OF GREAT POWER DOMINATION OF THE AREA ALTHOUGH WE REGRETTED THE USE OF MILITARY FORCE IN SETTling THE DISPUTE. KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 27 JUL 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 JAN 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974STATE018393
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EA:MSTEARNS:FMT
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: P750004-0425
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740175/abbrzcbk.tel
Line Count: 79
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <11 JUL 2002 by cunninfx>; APPROVED <19 DEC 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JAPANESE CONCERN RE CAMBODIA AND PARACELS
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Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005